

□ *Washington, DC -- Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today released the following statement regarding President Obama's announcement that he supports same-sex marriage. Hinchey is a cosponsor of the Respect for Marriage Act, which would repeal the parts of the Defense of Marriage Act that discriminate against same-sex couples.*

"I am very pleased that President Obama spoke out today in favor of allowing same-sex couples to marry. This is a simple matter of equality and fairness. If two loving adults want to marry one another, then they should be allowed to do so without any discrimination regardless of their sexual orientation. This is a basic right that should not be withheld from any committed couple. LGBT rights, especially same-sex marriage, is the civil rights issue of this generation and I am confident that it won't be long before all Americans look back at any anti-LGBT laws and prohibitions in the same shameful way that we look back on the segregation laws of just a few decades ago.

"It has never been, nor should it ever be, government's role to tell any American who they should or shouldn't marry. It's ironic that many of those in Washington who complain about too much government intrusion often are the same ones who oppose the legalization of same-sex marriage. What could be more of a government intrusion into one's personal life than telling someone who they can and cannot marry?

"Sexual orientation is something our government should not discriminate against. I urge my colleagues in Congress to pass the Respect for Marriage Act, which would overturn the

discriminatory language against same-sex couples that is contained in the Defense of Marriage Act."

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